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Informational open house set for students interested in apprentice program *TIA, KVCC offer innovative CNC program*

April 27, 2016 – Students and job seekers who are interested in applying for the Michigan Advanced Technician Training (MAT²) Computer Numerical Control (CNC) program this fall are invited to learn more about the program at an open house on Saturday, May 7, from 9:30 a.m. to noon at Kalamazoo Valley Community College's (KVCC) Advanced Technology Center, Room 5760.

Attendees will learn more about the program, speak with current employers and students, and tour the machine tool lab.

MAT², an innovative, industry-driven apprenticeship program, addresses two critical issues facing the manufacturing industry: a widening skills gap and an aging workforce. Students, over three years, alternate between classroom instruction and on-the-job training, gaining the necessary hands-on skills and experiences to become a successful and productive member of the workforce.

The Michigan Talent Investment Agency (TIA) and KVCC have partnered to provide this competitive opportunity for high school seniors, or anyone with a high school diploma or GED, to earn an associate degree as a CNC technician. The second cohort at KVCC will begin this fall. The first cohort began at KVCC in August 2015 and will complete the program in June 2018. Students interested in being selected for the 2016 cohort must meet certain qualifications, as this is a competitive program. Companies will interview and select each student to be sponsored.

"This is an excellent opportunity for students and job seekers to build great careers by joining the next generation of highly skilled technicians in Michigan," said TIA Director Stephanie Comai.

A CNC technician, at graduation, will be prepared to enter the workforce as a CNC machine operator and set-up person with the ability to plan, set-up, produce and inspect a variety of products utilizing computer numerically controlled machine tools to customer specifications.

"The MAT² CNC program is a life-changing experience for those who participate," said Tom Buszek, dean of instruction, business and industrial trades at KVCC. "It offers tremendous advantages that put you ahead of the game in terms of finding that exciting, rewarding career with an outstanding employer. This is more than just a program. It's a ticket to success."

Sponsoring companies help train the students and employ them during college and upon graduation. The students navigate the program as a cohort, attending college and working at the sponsoring companies in recurrent eight-week intervals. Each selected participant has their tuition paid for by an employer, is ensured a steady income throughout the program through a weekly stipend to assist with personal expenses while attending classes at KVCC and, when working, the student will earn an hourly wage.

Applicants must be high school graduates at the start of the program and provide their ACT scores or take the Compass exam. Interested individuals are encouraged to apply as soon as possible because applications are reviewed and accepted on an ongoing basis. Additional information, including the application site, can be found at www.mitalent.org/mat2.

MAT² Student Open House

Saturday, May 7, from 9:30 a.m. to noon at Kalamazoo Valley Community College, 6767 West O Ave., Kalamazoo, Advanced Technology Center, Room 5760.

To RSVP for the open house, or for more details, email wda-mat2@michigan.gov.

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